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EAST EUROPE BRANCH NOTES

1 Feb. 1974

State Dept. review completed

YUGOSLAVIA

Minic Returns to Belgrade

Foreign Minister Minic, who was accompanying Tito on his South Asian trip, returned yesterday to Belgrade reportedly because of illness. Tito is scheduled to return on 5 February.

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POLAND

Gierek Stresses Warsaw's Importance and Food Production Plan

Party boss Gierek gave a major speech to the Warsaw City Party Committee on January 30. His appearance and the fact that the media gave him better coverage than it gave Warsaw Committee First Secretary Kepa seem intended to reduce any lingering regional identification. The party chief talked mainly about the importance of Warsaw, which he said must become a model for the rest of the country, particularly in its everyday dealings with the citizenry. He also described an ambitious project to increase food production over the next 10-15 years.

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BULGARIA

Continued Low Key Response to Fishing Trawler Seizure

Sofia will soon invite Secretary of Commerce Dent to visit Bulgaria. This is a clear indication that it does not want the recent seizure of a Bulgarian fishing trawler by the US Coast Guard to endanger its improving relations with Washington. In a discussion yesterday in Sofia with the American DCM, the Director of the Americas Desk appeared concerned only with the financial suits which have been filed in US courts and not on broader Bulgarian-US relations.

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HUNGARY

The Art of Diplomacy

While Budapest is hosting East German Premier Sindermann for apparent economic discussions, the Hungarian foreign trade minister is winding up six days of economic talks in West Germany. The two concurrent events could well be a Hungarian move calculated to ease any East German concern over Budapest's very clear interest in stepping up its economic relations with West Germany.

The trade minister arrived in Bonn only a week after the Hungarian ambassador presented his credentials. He has seen numerous German officials, had a short session with Brandt on Thursday, and is now visiting factories in the Ruhr. The two sides apparently will not sign a long-term economic agreement during the visit, although a press item promised that one would be concluded "shortly." The agreement might well come during the now-scheduled visit of Bonn's Federal Economics Minister Friderichs to Budapest sometime in the near future.

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